



# Regional Brownfields Assessment Pilot

## *Boston, MA*

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5101)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower States, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. Between 1995 and 1996, EPA funded 76 National and Regional Brownfields Assessment Pilots, at up to \$200,000 each, to support creative two-year explorations and demonstrations of brownfields solutions. EPA is funding more than 27 Pilots in 1997. The Pilots are intended to provide EPA, States, Tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

### BACKGROUND

EPA Region 1 selected the City of Boston for a Regional Brownfields Pilot. The City's Brownfields Partnership Taskforce is providing funding to the Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative (BERI). This initiative has focused on the Dudley Street Neighborhood (DSN) located in the heart of Roxbury and North Dorchester in the City of Boston. The DSN is the principal business center for Boston's African-American community, yet it suffers from greater unemployment (30 percent) than other Boston neighborhoods. The DSN also bears a disproportionate number of Massachusetts' contaminated sites—with 4 percent of the State population, the DSN contains 9 percent of the State's listed contaminated sites. Thirteen hundred (1,300) vacant lots, many of which are contaminated with lead paint waste, extend over the 1.5 square miles of the DSN area.

### OBJECTIVES

The City of Boston is addressing brownfields as part of a multi-dimensional strategy to revitalize the Dudley Street Neighborhood. Various agencies and neighborhood groups are working together as members of BERI to direct economic growth to redevelop brownfields. These groups include: the City of

### PILOT SNAPSHOT



*Boston, Massachusetts*

**Date of Award:**  
September 1995

**Amount:** \$200,000

**Site Profile:** The Pilot targets the Dudley Street Neighborhood, which contains approximately 1,300 vacant lots, many of which are contaminated.

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Visit the EPA Brownfields Website at:  
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields>

Boston; the Boston Redevelopment Authority; EPA Region 1; the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative; el Nuestra Comunidad Development Corporation; the Alternative for Community & Environment, Inc.; the Environmental Diversity Forum; the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Office of the Attorney General, the Department of Environmental Protection, the Department of Capital Planning and Operations; and the University of Massachusetts.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

The Pilot has:

- Selected five target sites for the project. Phase I and Phase II site assessments are underway at two of the sites (Washington Street and Columbia Road sites);
- Conducted community outreach meetings to educate the community about brownfields, and to obtain feedback regarding acceptable development at the target sites; and
- Collected and stored information for five sites in a Geographical Information System (GIS), including economic assets, transportation, contamination levels, and zoning.

The Pilot is:

- Developing a community outreach and education program;
- Investigating ways to secure additional cleanup funding, engage in cost recovery litigation, and promote environmental compliance assurance;
- Developing a model to identify, map, and gather information on brownfields in the DSN area; and
- Developing a strategy for redeveloping brownfields that builds on previous brownfields redevelopment efforts and institutionalizes brownfields activities.

## LEVERAGING OTHER ACTIVITIES

Experience with the Boston Pilot has been a catalyst for related activities including the following.

- The City has embarked on several capital improvements in the DSN and has secured Federal Empowerment Zone funds to assist in the economic revitalization of Roxbury and other areas. The City plans to encourage development of jobs and the economy within the DSN by addressing remediation of the area's brownfields.
- Created an incentive package to encourage participation from developers and lenders. The package includes information on government grants and loans, relevant legislation, initiatives by the City, and a list of brownfields site attributes.
- The Pilot program provided information to the State Brownfields Committee which drafted brownfields legislation for the City.